Exploration by ONGC in Ramanatb-Iiuram in Taminadu

191. SHRI S. V1DUTHALAI V1RUM-*Bl* ■ *Will* the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to State:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Cor poration did any test in Ramanathpuram Disrict in Tamilnadu to explore and e^{x}– ploit Petroleum products including natu-

: and (bj jf so. the details

thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SAT1SH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ga$_s$ was struck in the well Ferun-gulam-1 in Ramanathpuram district of famil Nadu. Presently, one well Palko-lum-| is under drilling situated about 25 Kms. Sonh East in Ramanathapu-ram.

Amount alocated for conversion of DCjidig'-il-TiriicihaajiaHi Route

192. S H R I S . VIDUTHALAI VJRUM-Bl : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

ta) how much amount has been allocated for conversion of me;ie gauge line lo broad gauge during the last three years (year-wise) for Dindigul-Tiruchi-rapalli and Tiruchirapalli-Madras route: and

(b) how much amount has been spent for the above mentioned project during ihe same period?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) and tb). The information is being collected and wil) be laid on the Table of ihe Sabha.

Discontinuation of Railway Claims Tribunals

193. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA :

SHRI S-. K. T. RAMACHAN-DRAN: Will ihe Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased o state :

(a) th; places where the Railway Claims Tribunals have been discontinued and the reasons therefor, and

(b) the details of tribunals functioning so far. zone-wise?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF):

(a) ihe Railway Claims Tri-bunal Benches- has teen discontinued.

details of Tribunal Benches functioning at I nt are given below:

East Zone	:	Calcutta, Guwahati, Patna Bhubaneswar and Gorakh-pur.
West Zone	:	Bombay Nagpur and Ah-medabad.
North Zone	:	Delhi, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Jaipur and Bhopal.
South Zone	:	Madras, Bangalore, Erna-kulam and Secunderabad.

Accident of Bombay-Howra$_n$ Mail

194. SHRI O. P. KOHLI :

SHRI RAHASBIHARf BAR1K :

SHR1MATI KAMLA S-INHA :

DR. BAPU KALDATF:

SHRI RAM DEO BHANDAR1 :

SHRI GAYA SINGH;

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(.a) whether it is a fact that a number of passengers were burnt alive in *a* sleeper coach of the Bombay-Howrah Mail on 26-10-94 in the South Eastern Railway's Cbakradtaarpur division in Bihar;

(b) if so, whether the accident has been investigated and if so, with what del ails;

(c) the action taken to check such mishaps in future and the extent to which the railway officials are blameworthy to have failed to check the carry-ing of inflammable items in the trains: and

(d) the extent to which it is correct that over 100 passengers were travelling in the sleeper coach meant to acconimo-pleased to state:

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. MFFER SHARIEF):
(a) *Yes,* Sir. There was an accident involving fire on a second class sleeper coach of S001 Dn. Bombay-Howrah Mail between Lotapahar and Chakra-dharpur stations of Rourkela-Chakradhar-pur section of Chakradharpur division of South Eastern Railway on 26-10-94. 29 dead bodies were taken out from the rach, 4 passengers sustained grievous injuries and 13 others suffered simple injuries in the accident.

(b) Statutory inquiry into the accident is being conducted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, South Eastern Circle, whose Final Report is awaited.

(c) The following steps have been taken to preveni similar accidents:—

i'i) Educating the travelling public thrmif:h public address' system, news-rs, IV, radio and cinema slides, specially in regional languages, regarding dangers of carrying inflammable and explosive material on pas-senger I rains.

(ii) Apprehending passengers, haw-kers and vendors carrying inflammable materials on [he trains.

(iii) Proper maintenance of electrical devices in (he passenger coaches is ensured.

(iv) A pilot scheme called 'Instant Action Group", consisting of various staff, has been launched mainly fcr preventing unauthorised passengers en-tering reserved coaches, carriage cf suspicious anj inflammable articles and to take prompt action on complaints and grievances of passengers.

i:) Intensive checks are carried out at maintenance depot$_s$ to ensure smooth working of the alarm chain apparatus in passenger carrying trains.

tvi) Provision of fire fighting at rangements at nominated locations i railway premises and trains.

The cause and responsibility for thi fire on 800) Dn. is tinder investigatioi and will be concluded by the Commis sioner of Railway Safety. Action against railway staff held responsible, if any, wil be taken on receipt of the Final Inquiry Report.

(d) 83 passengers were travelling including RAC passengers.

Late running of No th East Egress

195. SHRI BHADRESWAR GOHAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that once famous North East Express to and from Guwahati and New Delhi has of 'ate become one of (he most neglected train in the Railway sei-up.

(b) what is the cause for regular in ordinate delay in running this train; and

to whethe,- Government would take immediate steps to regularise the train?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. lAFFER SHARIEF) : fa) to (c). The punctuality of 5621/ 5622 North-East Express has .been affected in the recent past due to various reasons particularly the following:

(i) speed restrictions for the entire Assam region for security reasons,

(ii) detention of trains at Gossai-gaonhat station by the Government of Assam for medical check-up of the incoming passengers on account °f outbreak of plague in different parts of the country,

(iii) non-interlocked working at Guwahati in connection with the conversion of Guwahati-Lumding section into Broad Gauge,

liv) single line system prevailing on ^{B}r?3fjer Railway,